

Hans Hansen, Manager of Engineering and Operations, reported that an ergonomic study was conducted in December 2003 in response to submittal of neck and back injury claims by some Electric Utility employees.

Interim City Manager Keeter stated that the cost of the modifications would come back to Council for final approval.

MOTION / VOTE:


The City Council, on motion of Council Member Hitchcock, Hansen second, adopted Resolution No. 2004-236 authorizing the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with Robert E. Lamb, Inc., of Valley Forge, PA, for architectural/engineering services for the Operations Center and appropriating funds in an amount not to exceed \$24,000 by a transfer from the Distribution System Improvement business unit to the business unit. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Council Members – Hitchcock, Howard, Land, and Mayor Hansen

Noes: Council Members – None

Absent: Council Members – Beckman

F. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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- Tyler Rothermel distributed written material to Council (filed). He spoke in support of allowing BMX bikes at the Kofu Skate Park. He stated that the "skate light" material on the ramps was endorsed for BMX bikes and some of the ramps are actually too large for skate boards. He noted that the city of Oroville allows bikes, skateboards, and roller blades at its skate park. He asked that Council place this matter on its next agenda.

Interim City Manager Keeter reported that staff had considered allowing BMX bikes in the skate park; however, it chose to reopen the park with in-line skaters and skate boarders only and to later evaluate the possibility of incorporating BMX bikes.

In reply to Council Member Hitchcock, City Attorney Schwabauer stated that the legislation that provides cities with limited immunity for the operation of skate parks only applies to children over 14 years of age. He noted there does exist a hazardous recreational activity immunity that cities have, which is independent of the limited skate park immunity, and he indicated that he would analyze it.

Council Members Land and Howard expressed support for allowing BMX bikes in the skate park if it does not increase the City's risk.

Mayor Hansen stated that staff would look into the matter and contact Mr. Rothermel.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- G-1 Notice thereof having been published according to law, an affidavit of which publication is on file in the office of the City Clerk, Mayor Hansen called for the public hearing to consider adopting Resolution/Order to Vacate a surplus portion of Maxwell Street.

Public Works Director Prima reported that Maxwell Street off of Stockton Street was originally developed as a cul-de-sac and was later extended south. The property owner has requested that the City abandon a piece of the right of way. Mr. Prima confirmed that the City would retain an easement for the utilities.

Hearing Opened to the Public

None.

Public Portion of Hearing Closed

filed 11-3-04  
Item F



**Fact: It is your responsibility to consider all of the issues.** BMX, Skateboarding and Inline, like all sports, can be dangerous. When considering the rules for your park, there are three main choices you have with respect to allowing BMX bicycles:

**- Allow BMX to ride all hours with skateboards and inline skaters.**

This is the model followed by the oldest parks in the world, and is currently being adopted by many public parks. From a BMX rider's perspective, this is obviously the most preferred option. We feel that all users of skateparks need to get along and learn to share. One of the most obvious things to do in this case is to make the park large enough for anticipated growth in the number of participants. Also, more space allows designers to place objects in the park further apart, giving participants more time to anticipate the they direction and avoid collisions. Consider that snowboards were not allowed in many ski resorts for many years for fear of injuries to skiers. It is now almost unheard of to discriminate against these athletes.

**- Have separate hours for BMX.**

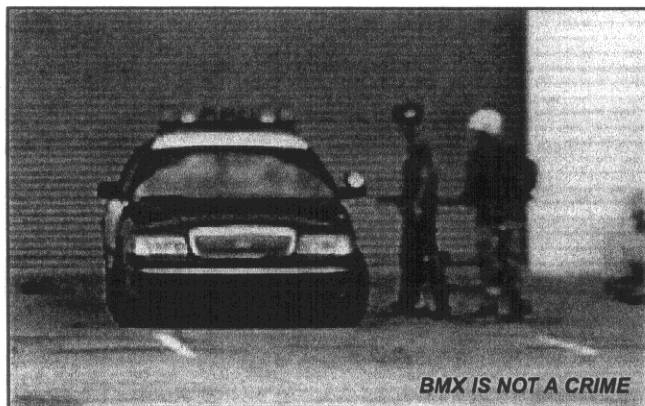
BMX riders understand the need to split the hours of use if the facility becomes too crowded during peak hours, but it should be understood that a new skatepark will have a rush of use when the park first opens. If separate hours are set up, they must be fair to all users of the park and include popular weekend and after-school timeslots for all sports. Times that are not crowded should be available for all to ride.

**- Build a bike only park in addition to your skatepark.**

This is a viable solution and some public BMX parks already exist. The BMX Riders Organization is in favor of building more of these parks, but we believe that it is unrealistic to think that skateboarders and inline skaters will not use these parks too, whether or not it is legal for them to do so. We feel that the best solution will be to open parks to all sports. If the parks are too crowded, an easy solution would be to simply rotate the days in which bikes and skates are allowed.

*There are many important details in building a public skatepark. It pays to hire skilled contractors who are practiced in building facilities for ALL sports. Please check the resources section of our website for a list of skateparks builders who support BMX. It is crucial that athletes from all sports have input during the design process.*

*We hope that this fact sheet will help you make decisions that are not only informed but also fair to all members of your community.*



**BMX IS NOT A CRIME**



*This fact sheet is meant to serve as a resource to Parks and Recreation administrators, skatepark designers, and builders to aid in understanding BMX riding in skateparks. It is also a resource for BMX riders to use when attending public planning meetings. There are currently many misconceptions about BMX park riding, and it is our hope that with more information available, reasonable compromises can be made that include BMX riders in all skateparks. For any comments or clarifications please contact the BMX Riders Organization at 1230 Market Street #502 San Francisco, CA 94102-4801 or email [info@bmxriders.org](mailto:info@bmxriders.org).*

**Fact: There are over 1 million BMX riders in the United States.** Despite the fact that we are the minority in the world of "Bikes, boards and blades", BMX freestyle is a rapidly growing sport and is clearly more popular than other sports that already have public facilities. According to Bicycle Retailer and Industry News, BMX bikes accounted for 30% of all bike sales in 1998. In some communities, the number of BMX riders even outnumbered skateboarders.

**Fact: BMX riders are part of your community.** These children are just as entitled to enjoy the benefits of public facilities as skateboarders and traditional "stick and ball" athletes.

Ticketing riders for using your public facility is unfair. Those who can afford these tickets are often willing to pay them, but for disadvantaged kids and their families, it is an undue burden.

**Fact: Sports are healthy for kids.** According to Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine (1995) 1 out of every 8 American kids suffers from obesity and another 1 in 5 is overweight. Obesity has more than doubled in the US since the 1960's. A recent study lead by Dr. Strauss, director of the childhood-weight-control program at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (NJ) found that the average child spent only 12 minutes a day running or playing hard. Obesity and physical inactivity account for \$100 billion in health care expenditures each year. More important are the emotional problems that accompany obesity. Skateboarders, inline skaters and BMX Riders will happily spend many HOURS per day practicing their sport, which in turn builds confidence.

More importantly, there have been countless studies showing that kids who participate in sports are less likely to use drugs or join gangs. Treating young BMX athletes as criminals is sending the wrong message!

It is noteworthy that baseball players were once treated as criminals because they played ball in the streets. Eventually they came to be accepted by society as athletes simply doing what they love. BMX riders are no different - we love to ride our bikes!



**Ryan Armstrong, 2001  
Alameda Cityview Skatepark**



Jeff Watson, 1981 - Rancho  
Mediterraia Skatepark

**Fact: There is a long standing history of BMX in skateparks.** "Skate"park is just a word. Just because it is called a skatepark doesn't mean that BMX riders don't practice there. There is really no such thing as a "bike" park.

BMX riders have been riding skateparks as long as skateboarders have. In fact, before the first skateparks were built, kids were riding Schwinn Stingrays in empty swimming pools.

The early roots of formal BMX "park riding" can be traced back to Lakewood skatepark, the first skatepark in California. This park was home to the most famous park riders of the 1970s, who were allowed to use the facility during all hours. They were also given special "bike only" days. In 1979, Lakewood Skatepark hosted the first BMX park competition.

For evidence of the long term effects of bikes in skateparks, we can look to the oldest parks in existence (such as Southsea and Romford in the

UK). These parks have served BMX, skating and roller-skates/inline for over 15 years without separate hours or additional maintenance overhead. There is no reason that public parks in the United States cannot do the same.

**Fact: Skateparks are just as useful to BMX freestylers as they are to skateboarders.** Like skateboarding, BMX is a creative sport and BMX riders find public skateparks to be just as useful as skateboarders do. BMX riders and skateboarders routinely compete on the same courses, and it is reasonable that they should be able to practice on the same courses.

**Fact: Your city may produce the next Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods of BMX.** Imagine if Tiger Woods grew up in your town but was not allowed on the golf course. This situation is happening right now with many talented young BMX athletes. ESPN reports that bicycle stunt is the most popular X-Games sport for television viewers. There might be riders in your community that could make your town famous!

The town of Edmond Oklahoma was in the same position many communities planning a skatepark are in - they had not thought to solicit BMX input and were later surprised by the amount of interest from BMX riders. Edmond is now planning to allow bicycles in their skatepark. Parks and Recreation Director Matt Meyer offered the following comment:

"Alternative sports such as BMX bikers and skaters also deserve access to public facilities so that they can practice and enjoy their sport just as much as participants in the traditional ball sports."

Edmond happens to be where Mat Hoffman grew up, and he is now a world class athlete who has made his town famous. Mat is also referred to as "the Tony Hawk, Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods of BMX".

**Fact: You have a choice to include BMX riders in your skatepark.** Many world-class skateparks exist that serve all sports. Some of these parks are publicly owned and operated. For a list of public skateparks that allow bicycles, please visit our web site at [www.bmxriders.org](http://www.bmxriders.org).



**Fact: Bicycling is on the hazardous sports list in almost every state.** The "Hazardous recreational activity" list in California is even more specific, and includes... "bicycle racing or jumping, mountain bicycling,"... (Ca. Gov. Code Sec. 831.7).

**Fact: Without public facilities, BMX kids are on their own to find places to ride.** With nowhere else to go, BMX riders will ride in the streets. This is certainly more dangerous than riding a skatepark and can cause damage to public and private property.

Remember that most BMX freestylers would rather ride in a skatepark than in the streets. However, like skateboarders, we adapt to our surroundings and make do with what we have.

**Fact: "If you build it they will come".** Regardless of what the signs say, BMX riders will ride public skateparks. This is not because we want to break the law, but rather that park riding is a popular discipline in BMX and there is currently a scarcity of facilities.

Discriminating against BMX riders in your public skatepark guarantees trouble for the local police department. Police resources are better spent fighting real crime rather than ticketing kids for riding their bikes.

It will not be as simple as putting up a "no bicycles" sign. BMX riders are now exposed to media such as the X-Games which show them riding the same "park courses" as skateboarders and inliners. Precedence has been set and it is reinforced by media images that group these sports in the same venues.

If you choose to completely exclude BMX riders from your skatepark they will only see your rule as discriminatory and ignore it (remember the failure of "no skateboarding" signs). These unfair rules can also produce an "us against them" attitude toward the police and the government.

**Fact: BMX racetracks and public dirt jumps are not a substitute for a skatepark.** A common question we get is "We have a local BMX track. Why don't these kids just ride there?" BMX tracks are great but they are for racing, which is a different sport from park riding. Though there is some overlap, most BMX freestylers would find no use for a racetrack. In sum, these facilities serve two different, though overlapping, groups.

**Fact: BMX bicycles do not destroy skateparks.** There is no study showing that BMX use will lead to greater wear than skates on a properly built skatepark. According to the Skatepark Association of the USA, "We have been surveying parks for several years and have not come up with any evidence that they cause any more wear and tear than skateboarders or inline skaters."

Concrete skateparks are now being built very sturdily and there is no proof of additional wear from BMX bikes. The myth that bicycles destroy skateparks may have started back in the days when ramps were sketchy wooden shanties with thin sheeting and inadequate bracing. Southsea and Romford, which are public skateparks in England, have over 15 years experience with BMX in their parks and have always remained open to all sports. Effraim Catlow, operator of Southsea skatepark for many years had this to say: "We run Bikes, Blades and Boards together every session, we've never had any problems. Contests run separately of course. Bikes have never affected the maintenance of the park."

Bicycles spend almost all of their time on rubber tires and only occasionally strike the surface with their pegs or handle bar ends. The manufacturer of Skatelite, the leading ramp surfacing product, has endorsed this product for BMX use. Skatelite has been in use at Mat Hoffman's BMX/skate ramp facility for over 2 years under the highest stress conditions and has held up fine.

It is important to remember that cement is far stronger than wood or Skatelite.